



Press Release

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El Monte Youth Take Part in INSPIRE Day-Long Leadership Conferences

El Monte, Calif. – Continuing in the tradition of supporting young people by presenting positive role models for success, the City of El Monte hosted INSPIRE: A Young Women's Leadership Conference and the El Monte Union High School District hosted INSPIRE for young men. These day-long conferences are designed to establish mentoring relationships and to provide these young men and women resources and tools for personal development in confidence, relationships, and finances.

Positive role models and influential speakers came together to take part in the fourth annual INSPIRE: A Young Women's Leadership Conference, an event spearheaded by Mayor Pro Tem Victoria Martinez. The keynote speaker, Anjelica Urquijo, shared wisdom gained from her experience as a local business owner and communications expert and advocate for expanding opportunities for women in business. Urquijo has served on the Boards of the Adelante Mujer Latina Conference and the Los Angeles Chapter of the National Latina Business Women Association. Nearly two hundred girls from El Monte schools were in attendance.

"El Monte is passionate about providing young people in our City with the opportunity to learn how to grow and excel from educated, inspiring individuals, many who have grown up in our community. The premise is, if they can do it, I can do it," said Mayor Pro Tem Victoria Martinez. "We are honored by all those who contribute to this event every year, investing in our community's future."

The conference featured three "break-out" sessions that focused on the themes of "Healthy Finances", "Healthy Minds", and "Healthy Relationships." After the trio of workshops, participants took part in small group discussions as part of the "Mentor's Lunch."

The El Monte Union High School District organized the INSPIRE: A Young Men's Leadership Conference, headed by the efforts of Board Member Ricardo Padilla. Using the successful model established by the existing INSPIRE women's conference, approximately one hundred young men aged 14-18 took part in three workshops designed to strengthen their financial acumen, develop and hone professional etiquette, and improve their overall health and wellness.

The keynote speaker for the event was Major Jim Dollard, USMC, a highly decorated veteran who has spent part of his career speaking at similar conferences around the country.

Immediately following the event, the City partnered with the GramMARCH Challenge at Arceo Park. Founded by Los Angeles area teacher Heather Shotke, the GramMARCH Challenge is a month-long initiative in which participants are encouraged to employ proper grammar in all of their written communication, such as texting, emails, and online

messaging. Shotke began the challenge when she found “text speak” had started to make its way into her students’ writing assignments.

Performances at the Extravaganza included cheerleaders from Arroyo High School, dancers from Rosemead's Get Down District and musicians Pynk Le'monade and all female mariachi Las Colibri.

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